

# **Renewable Energy in California:**

Implementing the Governors Renewable  
Energy Executive Order

## ***Conservation Planning and the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan***

Joint Public Workshop  
March 12, 2009  
Sacramento, California



**California Energy Commission**



**Department of Fish and Game**



**Fish and Wildlife Service**



**Bureau of Land Management**

# **Renewable Energy in California:**

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This presentation will focus on the elements of the Executive Order that address comprehensive conservation planning in the California desert and activities, processes, and actions designed to reduce permit review and issuance time. Specifically, it will cover:

- The Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT)
- Element 3: Department of Fish and Game reorganization
- Element 7: Initiation of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)
- Element 8: Designation of additional areas where an NCCP would be beneficial for permit assurances
- Elements 10-12: Process and structure of the DRECP

# **Renewable Energy in California:**

## *Implementing the Governors Renewable Energy Executive Order*

The Executive Order is intended to provide a more predictable and streamlined regulatory compliance framework while completing a conservation plan that will balance renewable energy development with natural resource conservation

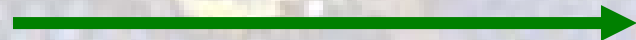
Establish and operate REAT



Create tools and collect and interpret data



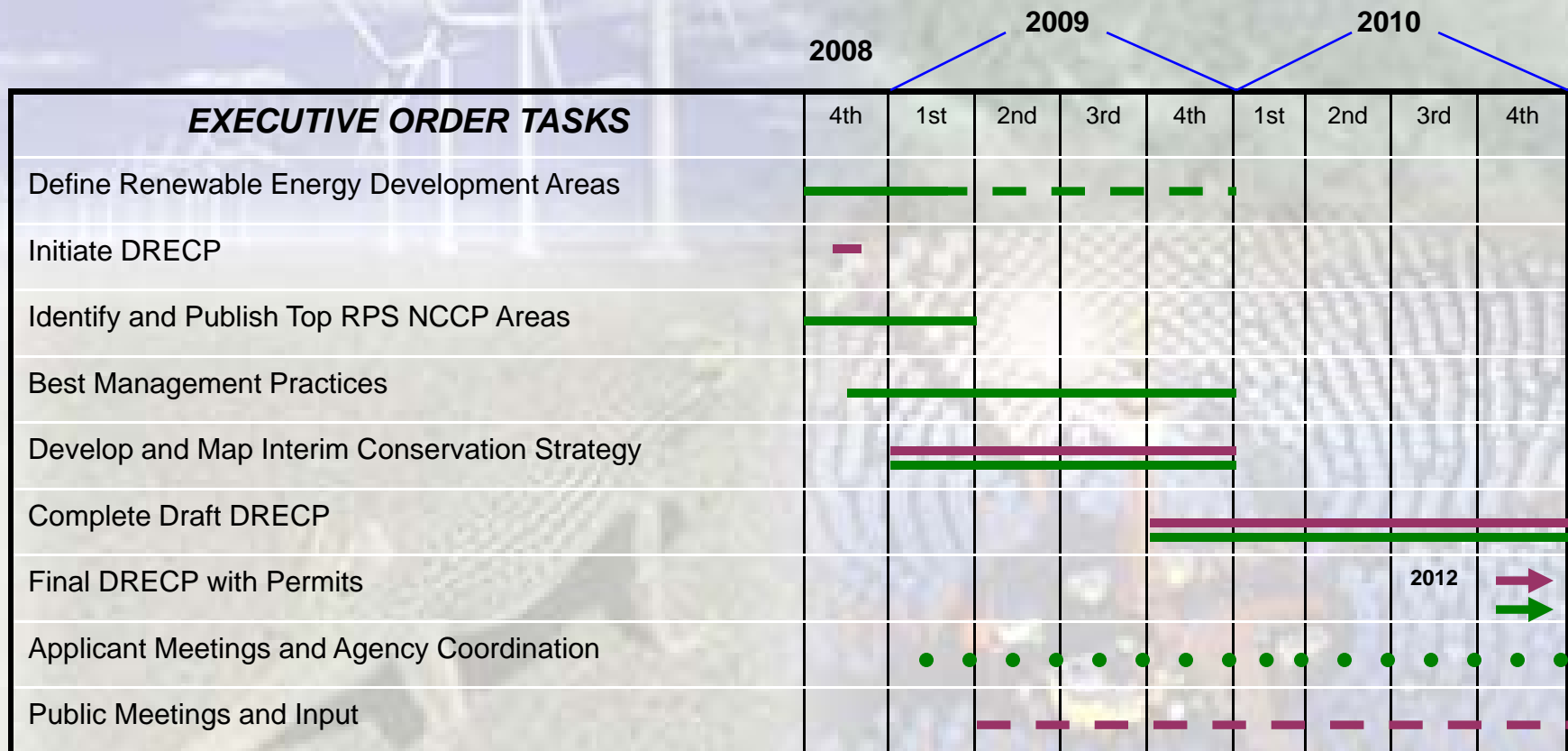
Develop Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan



# Renewable Energy in California:


## *Implementing the Governors Renewable Energy Executive Order*

### EO Implementation Schedule



REAT

DRECP



# **Renewable Energy in California:**

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The REAT

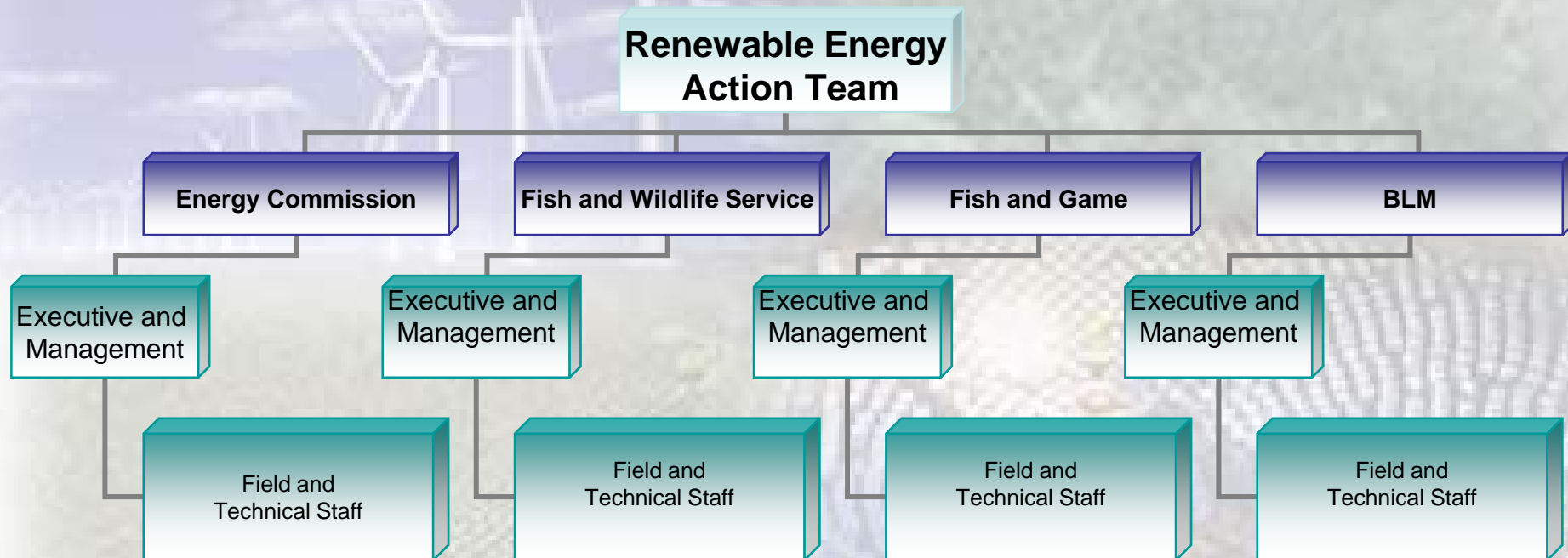
## **Renewable Energy Action Team**

- Comprised of the four MOU signatory agencies
- Holds “top to bottom” meetings every other week to address policy and process issues
- Primary function is to coordinate permitting and process activities among agencies
- Reports to policy team comprised of the Natural Resources Agency, Commissioners, and Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management directors
- Working technical unit for implementing the Executive Order

# Renewable Energy in California:

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The REAT



# Renewable Energy in California:

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The REAT

### Permitting Matrix: Projects > 50 mw on Private Lands

	CEC	CPUC	LOCAL	BLM	USFWS*	CDFG**
Wind	--	PPA Approval	CEQA/ CUP	--	FESA Section 10a or Section 7	CESA ITP or NCCP/ LSAA
Solar PV	--	PPA Approval	CEQA/ CUP	--	FESA Section 10a or Section 7	CESA ITP or NCCP/LSAA
Solar Thermal	CEQA/ License	PPA Approval	--	--	FESA Section 10a or Section 7	CEC Consultation
Biofuels - Generation	CEQA/ License	PPA Approval	--	--	FESA Section 10a or Section 7	CEC Consultation
Geothermal	CEQA/ License	PPA Approval	--	--	FESA Section 10a or Section 7	CEC Consultation

\* - assumes FESA species present

\*\* - assumes CESA species present, CESA Consistency Determination may be applicable

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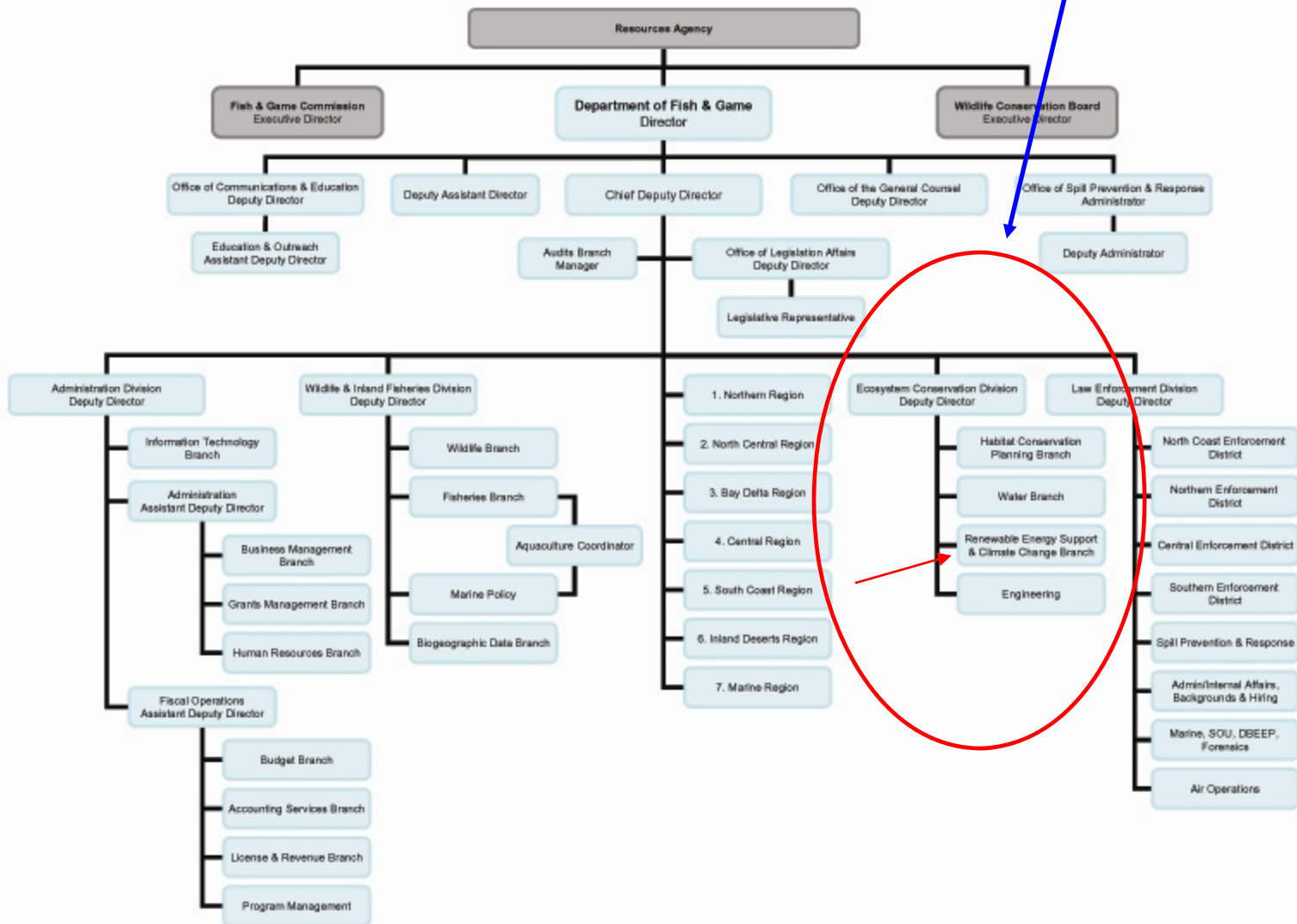
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# Renewable Energy in California:

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### Element 3: Department Reorganization




# **Renewable Energy in California:**

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The NCCP Act

## **Natural Community Conservation Planning Act: Background**

- Enacted in 1991
- Ecosystem, landscape approach to conservation
- Provides for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) incidental take authorization
- Provide for species conservation and management
- Provides for listing assurances for duration of the permit
- Introduces the possibility of federal and state conservation funding

The background of the slide is a composite image. The upper portion features a row of white wind turbines against a clear blue sky. The lower portion shows a person wearing a wide-brimmed hat and a patterned shirt, standing in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. The overall image has a soft, slightly blurred quality.

## **Renewable Energy in California:**

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The NCCP Act

### **Natural Community Conservation Planning Act: Background**

- Extensive stakeholder process
- Independent scientific review and input process
- Integration with other planning processes
- Integration with other conservation efforts


# Renewable Energy in California:

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The NCCP Act

### NCCP and Individual Take Permit Provision Comparison

<i>Individual Take Permit (ITP)</i>	<i>NCCP</i>
Intended for a single action with a finite impact and conservation horizon	Intended for a range of activities that would occur over the life of the permit
Usually a single project applicant	Often many applicants or local government or state agency applicant
Project centric and oriented	Ecosystem or functional ecological unit oriented
“Take” authorization standard is “fully mitigate” all project actions	NCCP standard is “provide for conservation and recovery” of species
No assurances	Department may authorize assurances
Applicant responsible for funding entire range of mitigation requirements	Provides for state and federal contributions to meet conservation and recovery standard



## **Renewable Energy in California:**

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The NCCP Act

### **Natural Community Conservation Planning Act: Implementation**

- Planning agreement establishes roles and responsibilities of Plan participants, defines initial “covered activities”, and identifies conserved species and habitats
- Acquisition and preservation actions funded by applicants with contributions from state and federal government
- Preserve design implemented through a variety of actions in concert with other planning efforts
- NCCP permit can have a working life of 50 years
- Rough step concept

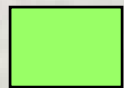
# Renewable Energy in California: *Implementing the Governors Renewable Energy Executive Order*

The NCCP Act

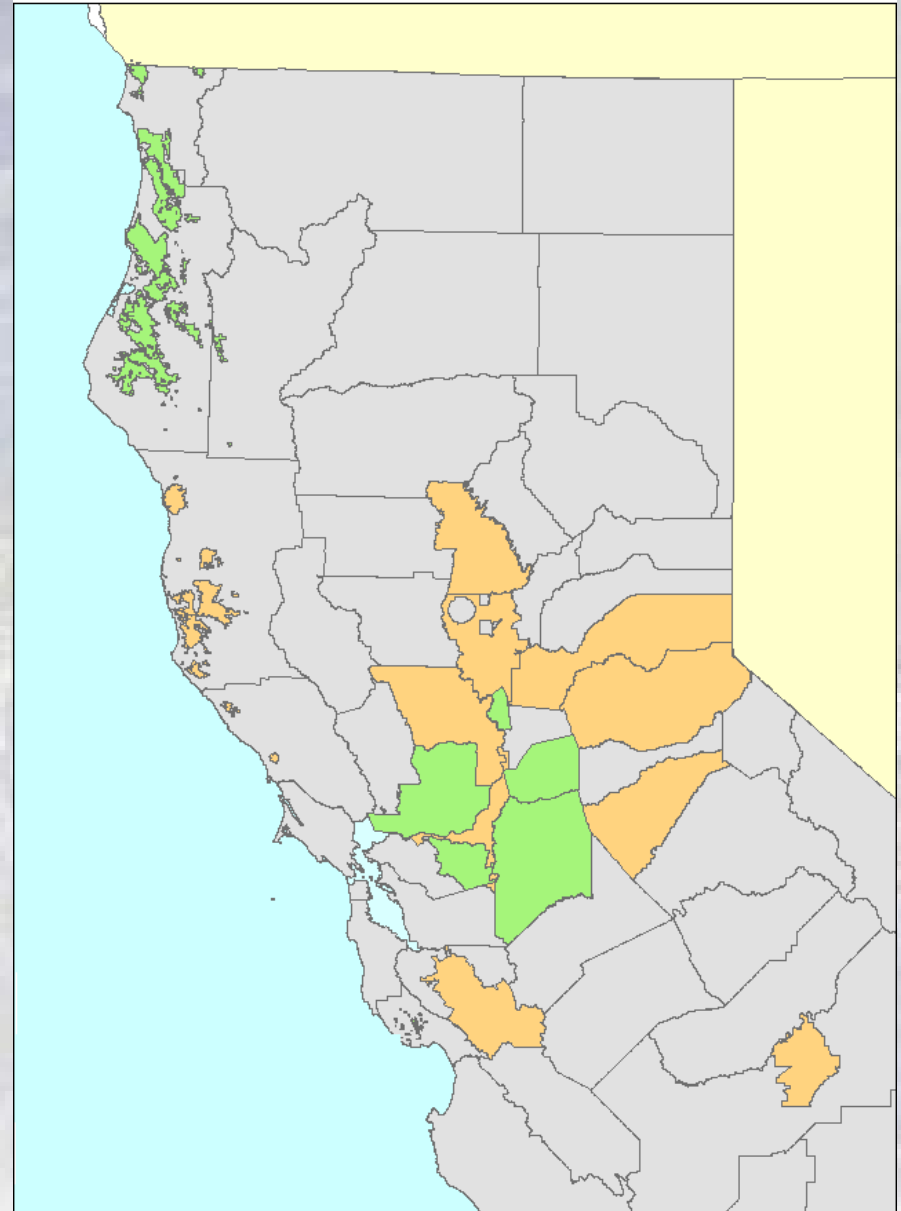
## Natural Community Conservation Plans (Northern California)



In the Planning Process



Completed





# Renewable Energy in California:

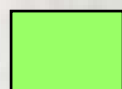
*Implementing the Governors Renewable Energy Executive Order*

The NCCP Act

## Natural Community Conservation Plans (Southern California)



In the Planning Process



Completed



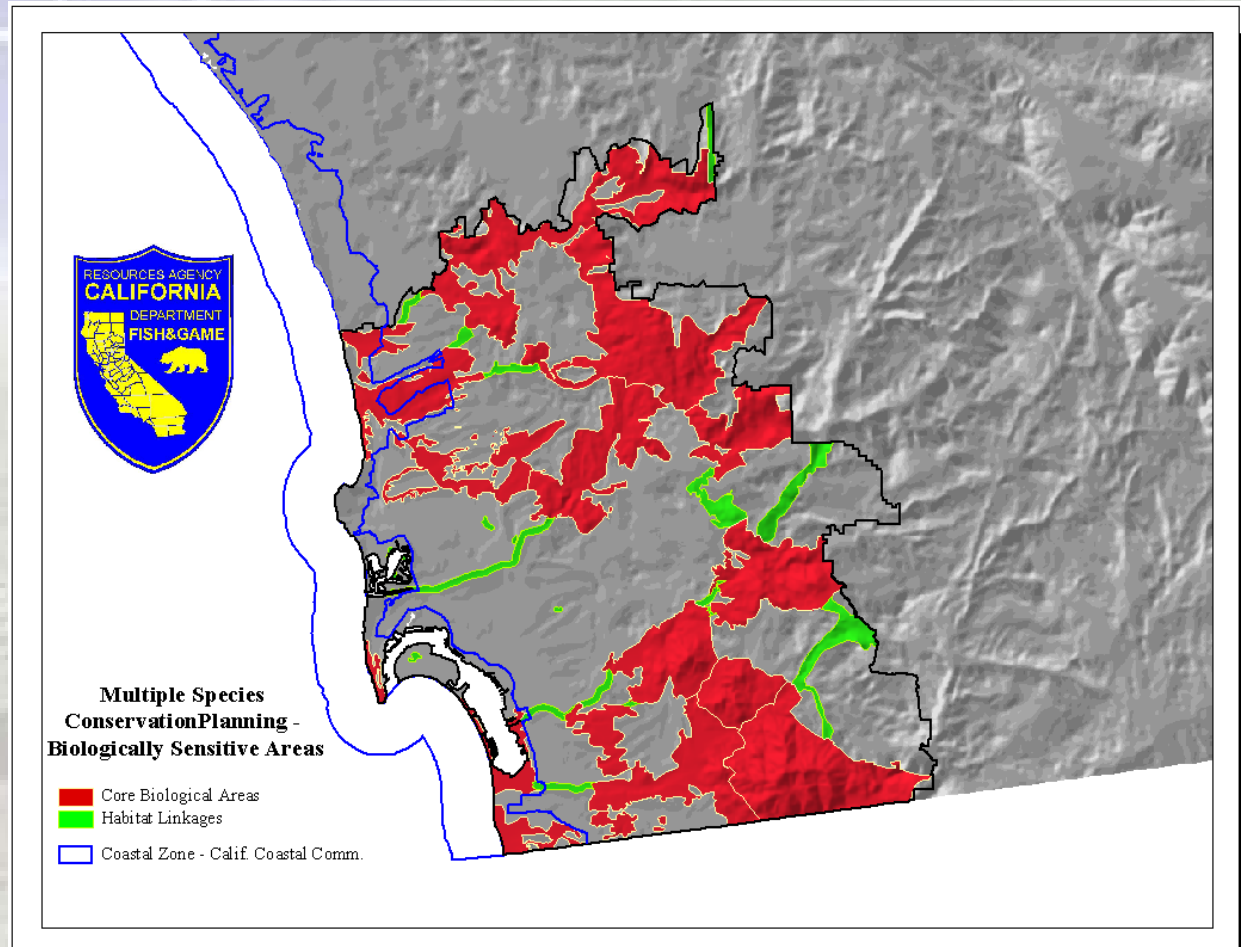
# Renewable Energy in California:

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The NCCP Act

### Natural Community Conservation Planning

- The planning process incorporates most current and viable scientific information
- Stakeholder process to identify conservation and permitted areas
- Result is matrix of core biological and connectivity areas

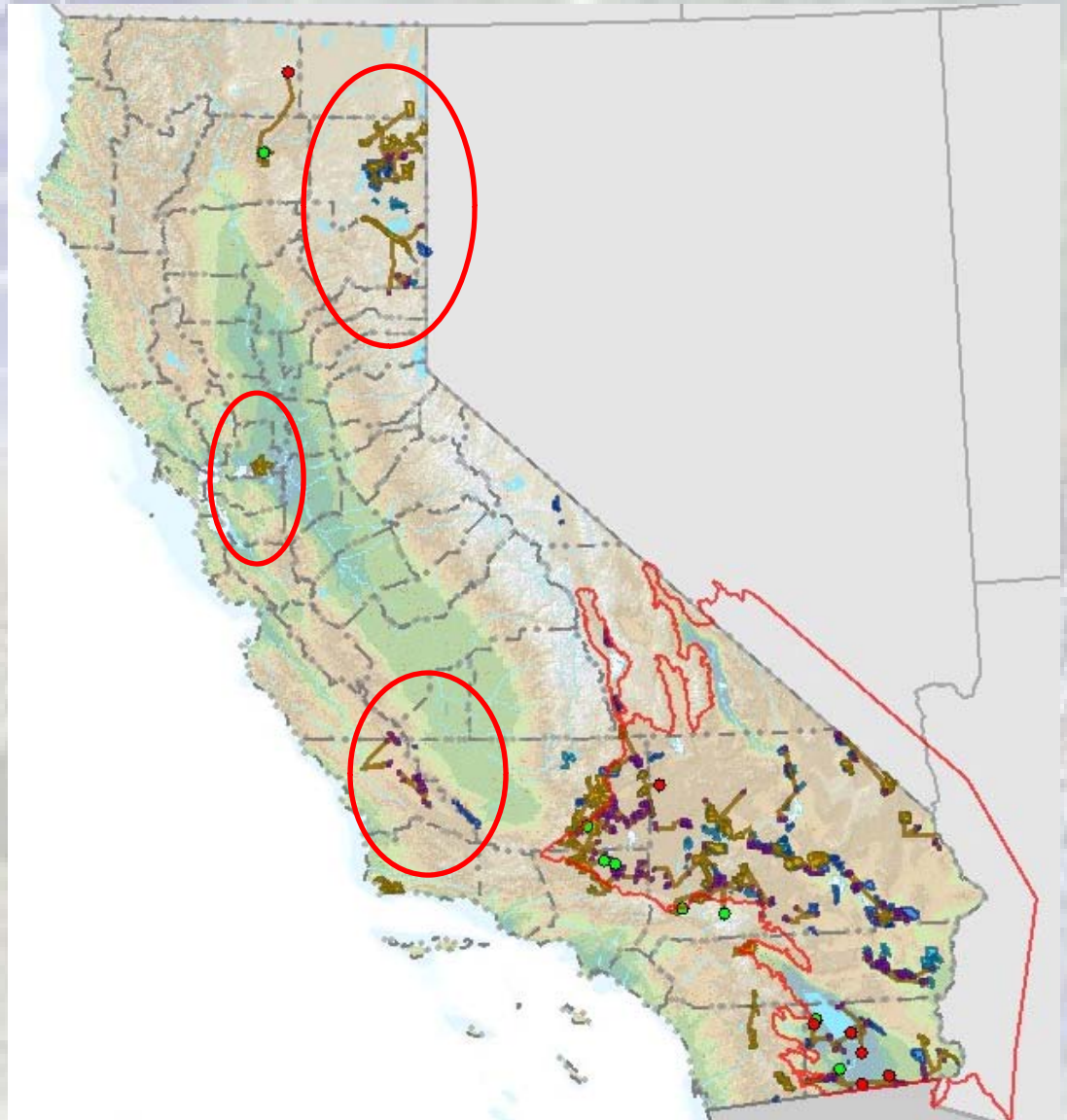



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EO Element 8:  
NCCP Priorities

- Current focus is on the desert with development of the DRECP
- Future development of NCCPs for RPS projects will focus on the Modoc Plateau and the Carrizo Plain
- Initial planning for an NCCP underway for the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area





# **Renewable Energy in California:**

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**EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP**

## **The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan**

- Identify geographic areas designated for RPS project development
- Identify areas for conservation and declining species management
- Focuses on the Mojave and Colorado desert regions
- Goal is to coordinate and consider desert land uses and activities during the planning process



# Renewable Energy in California:

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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP

## The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

- Includes the Mojave and Colorado Desert ecoregions
- Parts of six counties
- Focus is on Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) projects



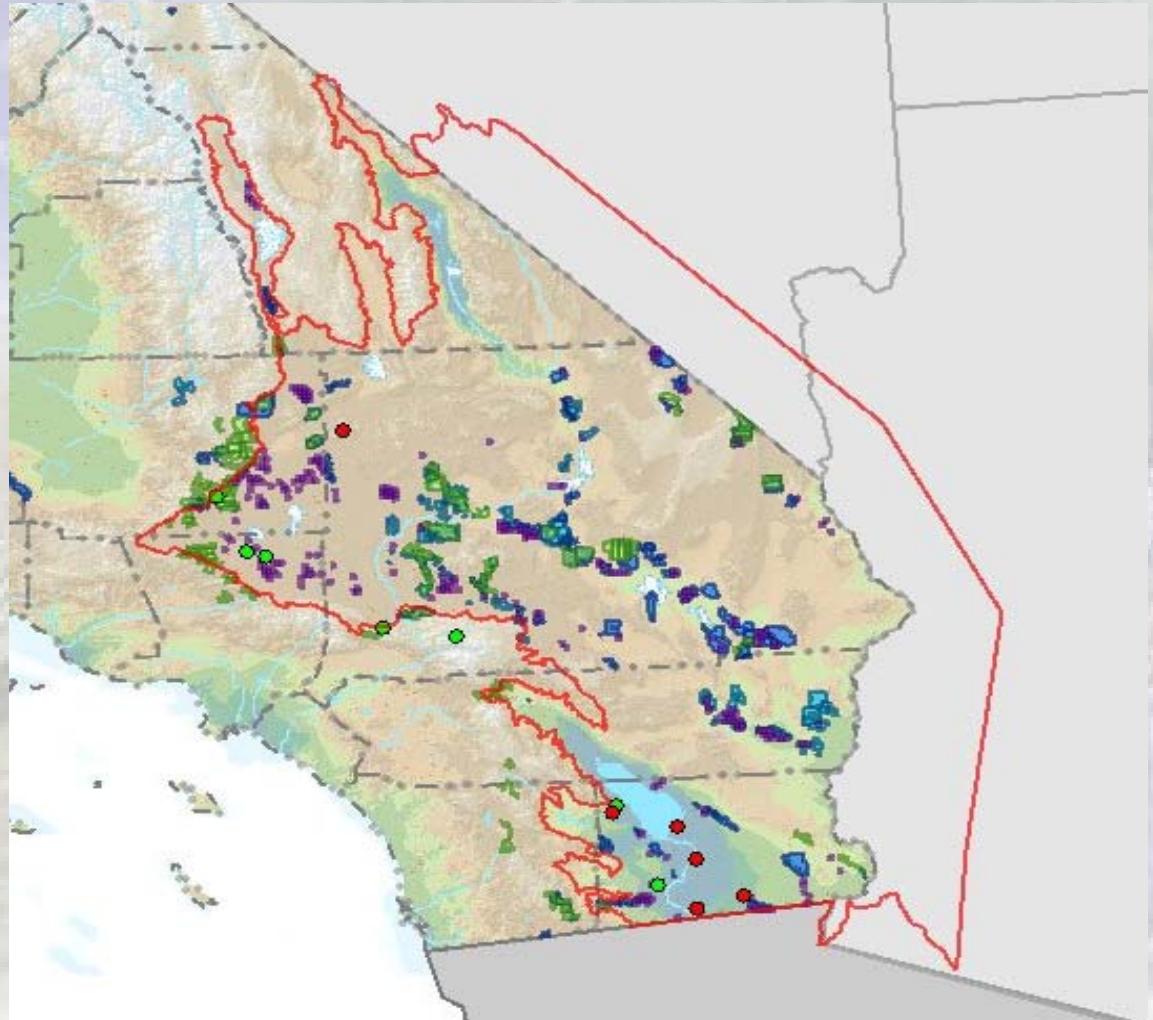
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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP

## The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

- Designed to incorporate existing and potential project areas
- Specific covered activities (RPS projects) drive permit coverage
- RETI results will modify and help direct covered activity area design



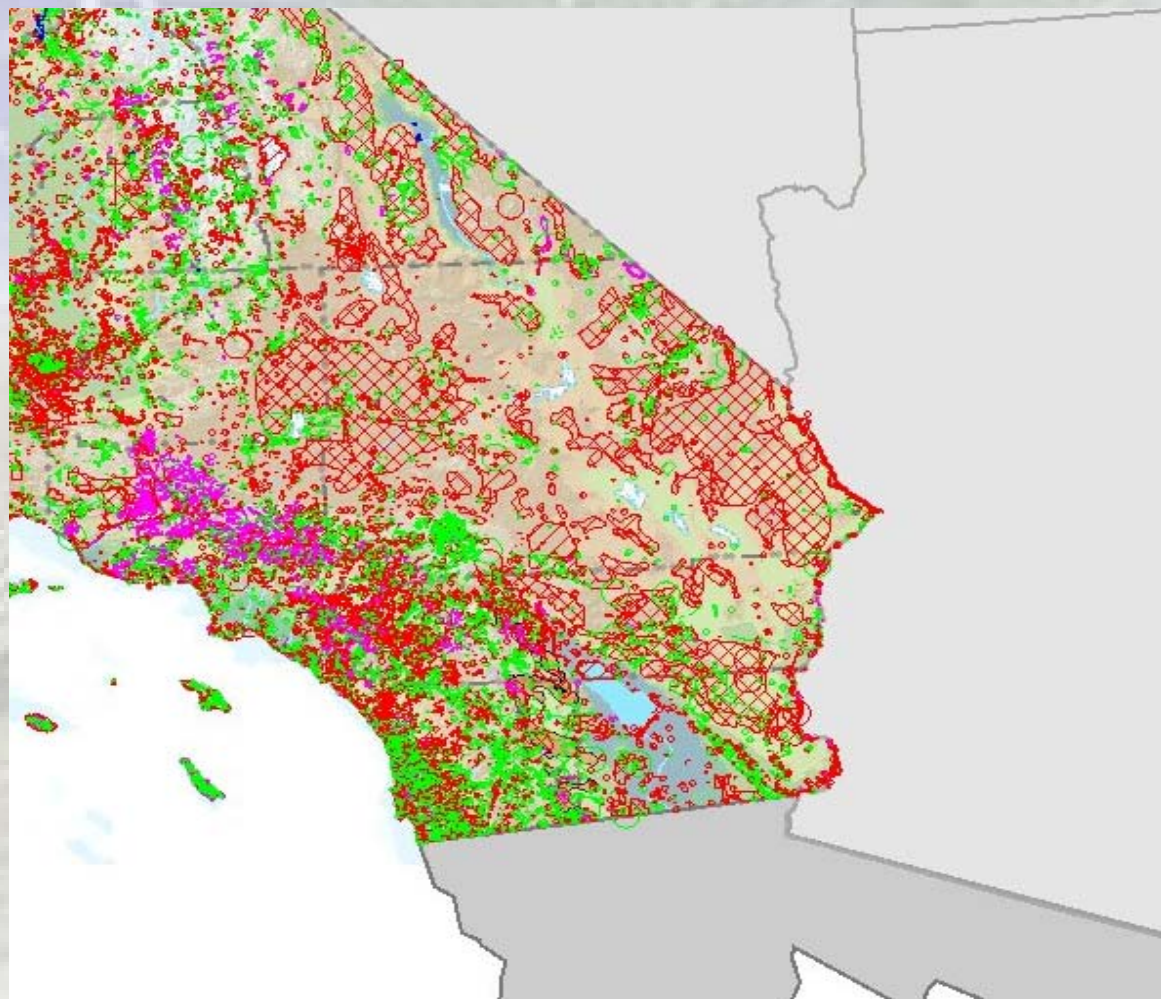
# Renewable Energy in California:

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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP

## The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

- Incorporates best existing biological data
- Conservation area designation will consider many factors
- Data quality, extent, and availability will be key!

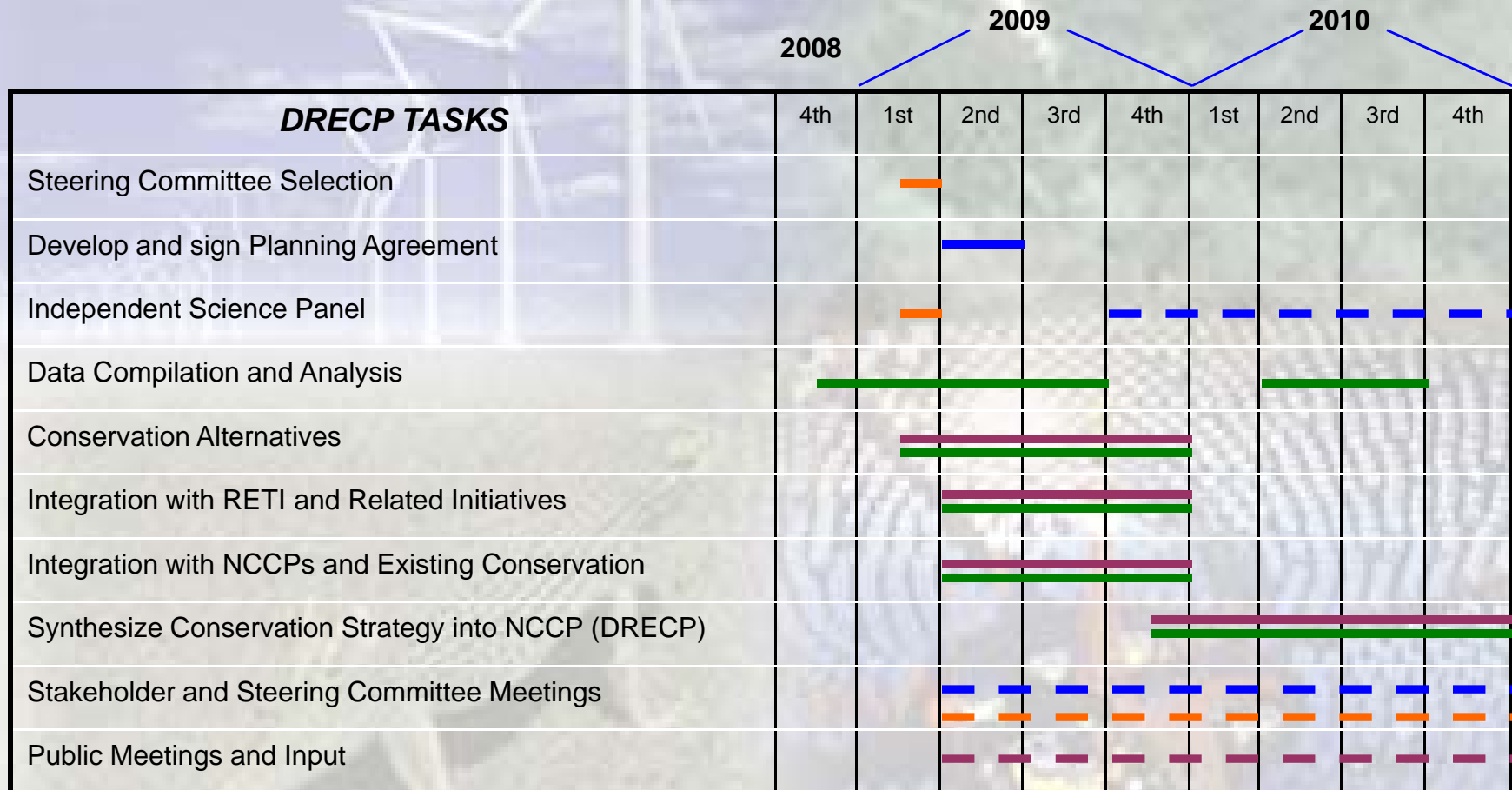




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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP



REAT

Resources  
Agency/CEC

Steering  
Committee

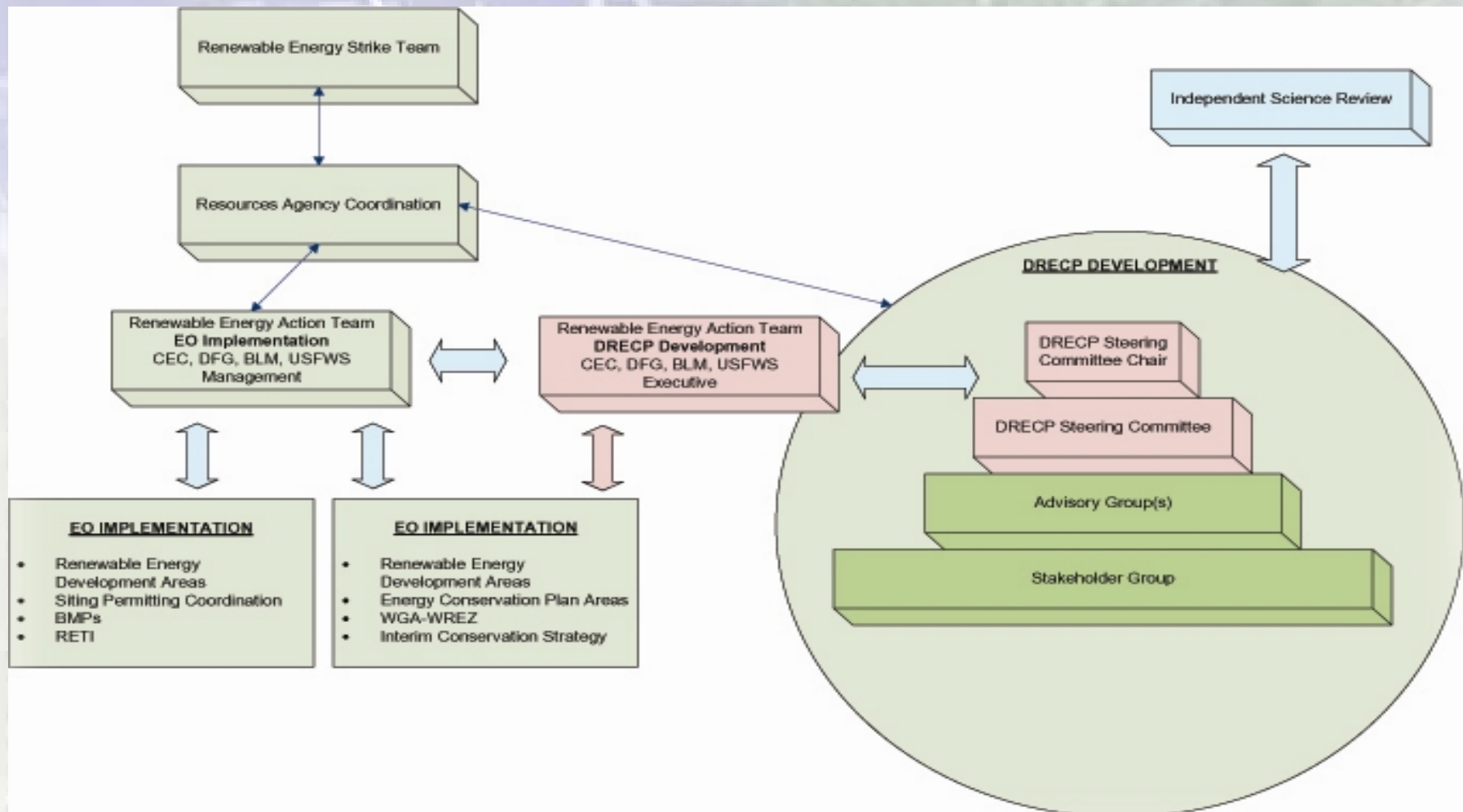
DRECP




# Renewable Energy in California: *Implementing the Governors Renewable Energy Executive Order*

REAT, REST, and  
The DRECP

## Conceptual Agency and Team Organization





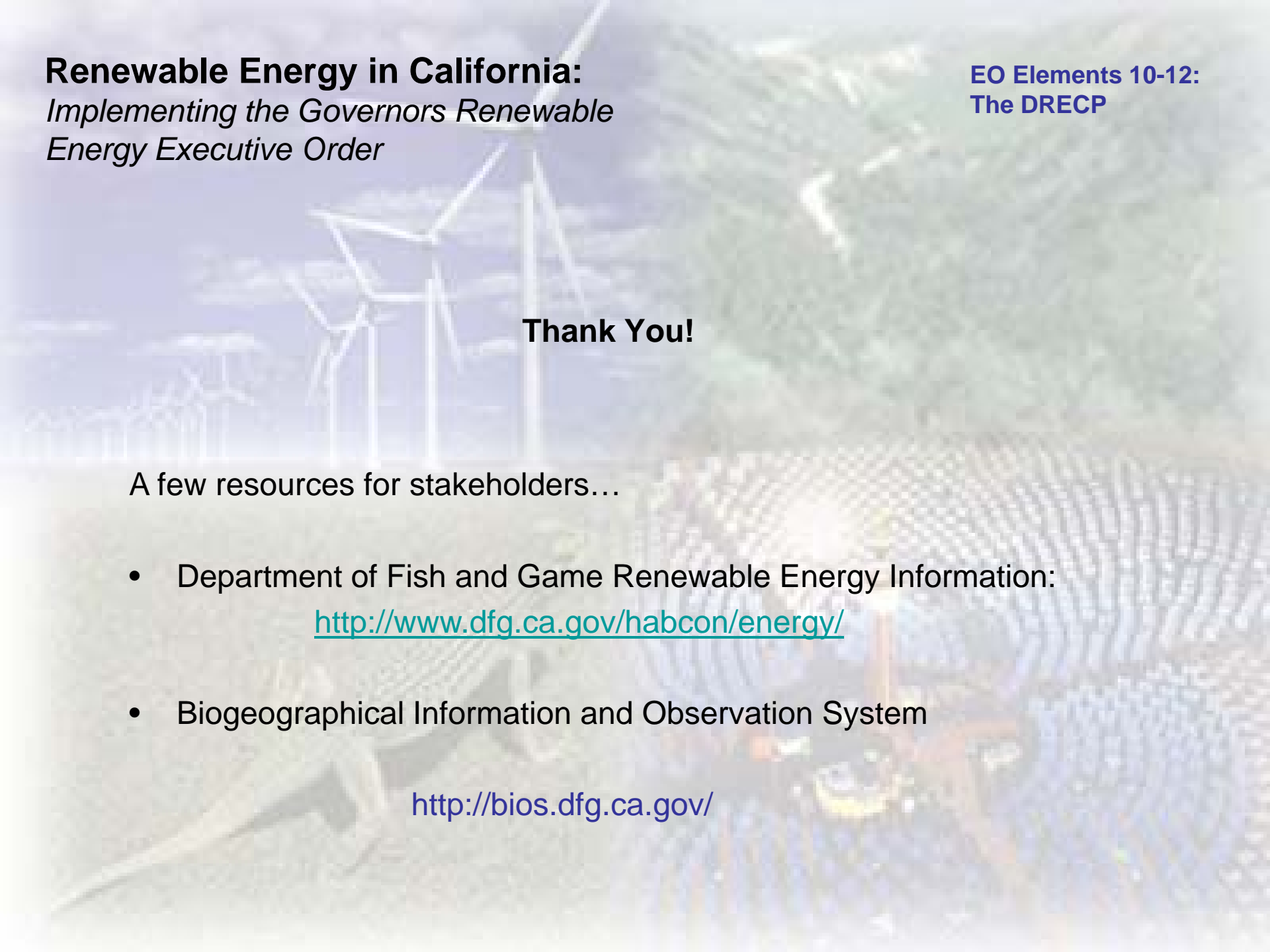
# **Renewable Energy in California:**

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**EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP**

## **The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan: Challenges**

- Integration of, and coordination with, current conservation and planning efforts
- Integration of, and coordination with, current renewable energy and transmission planning efforts
- Aggressive time frame
- Meeting complex and evolving conservation objectives over multiple land owners and land uses
- Overcoming multi-agency culture and process impediments to create a seamless and integrated permitting process



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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP

**Thank You!**

A few resources for stakeholders...

- Department of Fish and Game Renewable Energy Information:  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/energy/>
- Biogeographical Information and Observation System

<http://bios.dfg.ca.gov/>